AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for billing for web services comprising the steps of:

    - creating a descriptor file designating a pre-defined element;

    <u>-</u> <u>storing said descriptor file in a tangible computer readable medium;</u>

    - configuring a handler <u>resident on a computer comprising a processor operable to execute computer readable instructions</u> to monitor a web service network communication, between a service requestor and a service provider, for said predefined element in said descriptor file;

    - configuring said handler to send said pre-defined element to a set of programmed instructions to create an event record<u>, wherein the set of programmed instructions is configured to copy the pre-defined element from the network communication into the event record</u>;

    - electronically transmitting said event record to a billing system for further processing;

    wherein the handler configured to monitor for said predefined element in said descriptor file is located at an entity taken from the list of entities consisting of:

    a) the service requestor; and

    b) the service provider.

2.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said programmed instructions are configured to determine whether an event corresponding to said event record requires authorization.

3.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said programmed instructions are configured to determine whether an event corresponding to said event record requires rating.

4.   (Currently Amended) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising: the steps of transforming said pre-defined element according to a set of instructions in said descriptor file before transmitting said event record to the billing system.

5.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said web service network communication comprises a request for a web service and a response to said request wherein said request comprises a start time and said response comprises an end time and further comprising the steps of:

-       creating a first event record comprising said start time;

-       sending said first event record to said billing system;

-       queuing said first event record in said billing system;

-       creating a second event record comprising said end time;

-       sending said second event record to said billing system;

-       matching said first event record with said second event record;

- calculating a charge for said web service based on said start time and said end time;

- returning said charge to said service provider.

6. (Original) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said billing system comprises programmed billing instructions coded to determine whether a web service transaction may be performed.

7. (Original) A computerized method as claimed in claim 6 wherein said programmed billing instructions are configured to determine if said service requestor is permitted to access said web service transaction.

8. (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 7 wherein said billing system returns a response to said web service provider indicating whether said web service transaction should proceed.

9. (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 6 wherein said programmed billing instructions are configured to determine whether said service requestor is solvent enough to purchase said web service transaction.

10. (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said programmed billing instructions are configured to return a response to a set of application code associated with said web service provider indicating whether said web service transaction should proceed.

11. (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said programmed billing instructions are configured to return a response to said web service provider indicating a quantity for said web service transaction to proceed.

12.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said web service network communication comprises a SOAP message stream; wherein the service requestor accesses the service provider on a direct peer-to-peer basis; and wherein the handler is located at the service provider.

13.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 12 wherein said SOAP message stream comprises a set of data including quality of service information, authorization key fields, version numbers, encrypted account information, and start/stop time.

14.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 12 wherein said billing system uses said pre-defined element in said SOAP message stream to support at least one pre-defined billing plan.

15.   (Previously Presented) A computerized method as claimed in claim 14 wherein said pre-defined billing plans is chosen from a list consisting of subscriptions, bundled plans, time-based usage plans, re-occurring charges, one-time charges, discount plans based on usage, discount plans based on time-of-day, discount plans based on customer loyalty, discount plans based on family/organization relationships, tiered plans, location dependent pricing, and combinations thereof.

16.   (Currently Amended) A tangible computer-readable medium having computer executable instructions for performing a method comprising

        -       receiving a descriptor file designating at least one pre-defined element;

        -       utilizing said descriptor file to monitor a web service network communication for said pre-defined element(s);

        -       copying said-predefined element(s) from said network communication into a record;

- electronically sending said record to a billing system for further processing.

17. (Previously Presented) A system for billing for web services comprising:

- a descriptor file;

- a handler;

- a record; and

- a billing system

wherein

- said descriptor file designates at least one pre-defined elements;

- said handler is configured to monitor a web service network communication, between a service requestor and a service provider, and to intercept said communication if said communication corresponds to said at least one pre-defined element in said descriptor file;

- said handler is further configured to copy said pre-defined elements from said network communication into a record;

- said handler is further configured to electronically transmit said record to a billing system for further processing.

18. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 17 wherein said billing system is embedded within a web service server; wherein said further processing comprises determining whether said service requestor is solvent enough to purchase a web

service corresponding to said web service network communication; wherein said web service network communication comprises a SOAP message stream; wherein said handler is located at the service provider; and wherein the service requestor accesses the service provider on a direct peer-to-peer basis.

19.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the monitored web service network communication is between a service requestor and a service provider, and wherein the computer readable medium is located at the service provider.

20.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein the web service network communication comprises a communication where the service requestor accesses the service provider on a direct peer-to-peer basis.